



FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

LORANNE AUSLEY
HOUSE DISTRICT 09

Senator Bill Nelson
United States Senate
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Nelson:

This letter is provided in support of the application for an appropriation which is being submitted on behalf of the John Gilmore Riley Center/Museum. A National Register property, the Riley House, in which the applicant organization is located, is one of Florida's most heralded interpreted properties. The Riley House is the only home in Florida of a former slave that has been restored, and that is being preserved and interpreted on a daily basis. Its value to present and future generations as a heritage site and educational resource, through which stories of the area's people, culture and heritage can be shared, is immeasurable.

Properties such as the Riley House, constructed in 1890, require much support to ensure its perpetual maintenance and care. It also demands the best of professional care in order to ensure the continuation of quality programs. We in Florida must do all that we can to preserve structures and programs like the Riley House, which unfortunately are sometimes overshadowed by larger programs. Please help preserve this invaluable historical, cultural and educational monument.

Thank you for assistance and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lorraine Ausley".

Representative Lorraine Ausley



THE FLORIDA SENATE

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

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Banking and Insurance
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SENATOR ALFRED "AL" LAWSON, JR.
6th District

December 12, 2003

The Honorable Bill Nelson
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Nelson:

This letter is to solicit your support by putting in place an appropriation for the John Gilmore Riley Center/Museum for African American History & Culture, located in Tallahassee, Florida. As you are aware, we are fortunate in Tallahassee to be able to share facets of our heritage. Historic homes, such as the Riley House in downtown Tallahassee, need our attention if they are to remain the culturally rich places that they are.

Constructed in 1890, the Riley House requires adequate resources to maintain it perpetually if it is to survive. This unique historic treasure just happens to be located in Tallahassee, but serves the entire state as a clearinghouse on matters pertaining to the preservation of African American heritage. We must protect it for future generations.

I respectfully request your advocacy and presentation of an appropriation request on the Riley House's behalf.

Thank you for assistance and if I can help in any way, please advise.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Al".

Alfred Lawson, Jr.

AL/bk

REPLY TO:
□ 210 Senate Office Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100 (850) 487-5004

Senate's Website: www.flsenate.gov

JAMES E. "JIM" KING, JR.
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16

24

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Attachment #
Page 3 of 17
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PANAMA CITY, FL 32401
(850) 795-0812

December 3, 2003

The Honorable Bill Nelson
United States Senate
716 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Nelson:

I would like to offer my enthusiastic support for the application submitted on behalf of the John Gilmore Riley Center and Museum. It is my understanding that your office has been working with the center to prepare an appropriations proposal for 2004-2005, along with the office of Senator Bob Graham. I would like to add that my fellow member, Congresswoman Maxine Waters has contacted my office in support of this request as well.

The Museum's dedicated employees are well known for their positive character, professionalism and great enthusiasm. The center's cultural programs have proven to be an invaluable resource to our community as well.

Therefore, I respectfully solicit your attention to the Riley House as a project for which we should advocate during the upcoming budget cycle. Thank you for assistance.

Sincerely,



F. Allen Boyd, Jr.
Member of Congress

AB:ccm



Florida House of Representatives

Representative Curtis Richardson

District 8

House Democratic Caucus, Vice-Chairman

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Education K-20
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Judiciary

Subcommittees:
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Health Appropriations
Insurance Regulation

December 8, 2003

The Honorable Bill Nelson
United States Senator
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Nelson:

This letter is provided in support of the application for an appropriation that that is being submitted on behalf of the John Gilmore Riley Center/Museum. Located in one of the oldest African American National Register properties in the State of Florida, the Riley House is truly a national treasure worthy of being preserved. The value of the programs that are being produced by staff and volunteers speaks volume to the commitment that local citizens have to continue the legacy of John Riley, the first black principal in Leon County. Mr. Riley served throughout the state as Grand High Priest of the Royal Arch Masons of Florida, was a charter founder of the Tallahassee Civic League, Secretary of the Tallahassee NAACP, and was a spokesperson for many organizations during his lifetime. Born into slavery in September 1857, John Riley excelled despite the odds. By the time of death at age ninety-seven (97), he owned over 150 parcels of real estate, much of it in downtown Tallahassee. The Riley House is located in Tallahassee, but serves the entire state through The African American Heritage Preservation Network that was originated by the applicant. A statewide conference is also held by the organization to educate professionals and "grassroots" individuals around the state to the fact that using community history and the arts to attract visitors and increase the awareness of locals is a sound economic strategy.

I have personal knowledge of the success of this organization, despite is very limited staff. In that regard, there is a critical need to improve the infrastructure of the organization. An appropriation will assist the organization to accomplish this, with a priority being hiring the first fulltime appropriately compensated professional and para-professional for the organization.

C 16

December 8, 2003
Page 2

I am pleased to provide this letter of support and solicit your influence to ensure that funds are directed toward the Riley House, assuring the perpetual protection of this coveted treasure. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Curtis Richardson

CR:jer

JOHN R. MARKS, III, MAYOR



December 12, 2003

The Honorable Bill Nelson
U.S. Senator
U.S. Courthouse Annex
111 North Adams Street
Suite 108
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Dear Senator Nelson:

This letter is to solicit your favorable consideration of the grant application from the John Gilmore Riley Center/Museum. A national register property, the Riley House has been a cultural treasure in our community for 100 years. I am pleased that the city saw fit in 1997 to acquire this property and that citizens of Florida had the foresight to take the appropriate steps to ensure that it remained standing, and open to the public, for our enjoyment and enlightenment.

The city of Tallahassee continues to be a staunch supporter of historic preservation and the Riley House. Recognizing the latter's heritage niche, and the opportunities that it yields economically and culturally, we are duty bound to do all we can to ensure its continued existence, forever. Thank you for sharing this commitment with us.

Your funding of this grant is deeply appreciated.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Marks".
Mayor John Marks



TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Attachment # 3
Page 7 of 17

November 20, 2003

Senator Bill Nelson
111 North Adams
Suite 208
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Dear Senator Nelson:

Tallahassee Community College and the John Gilmore Riley Center/Museum have entered into an agreement which has historical and educational implications for the state and nation.

Your support in obtaining operational funds for the John G. Riley Center/Museum will immeasurably advance this unique partnership and our combined determination to identify, preserve and catalogue one-of-a-kind historical documents. TCC is a full partner in providing office facilities and housing for a portion of the Riley Center/Museum collection. As a result, the collection will be accessible to students from the community college, universities and high schools around the state and the region

The Riley Center/Museum and TCC partnership is a model of a community based grassroots collaboration. This partnership will provide opportunities for students to enhance their understanding and knowledge of history and introduce them to information that can lead to career choices focused on the arts and humanities. The partnership also furthers intergenerational mentoring opportunities between senior citizens and students in the recording of oral histories.

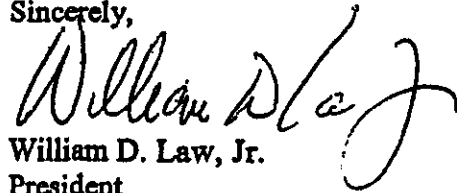
The Riley Center/Museum is unique in that it is the only house of a former slave in Florida that has been restored and is serving as an interpretive tool for African American history through an active educational and community outreach program. It is only the second African American house in Florida to be designated a national register property - the first being that of Mary McCleod Bethune, founder of Bethune Cookman College in Daytona Beach, Florida.

The Riley Center/Museum serves the state of Florida and the Southeast Region as a clearinghouse, providing technical assistance on matters pertaining to preservation of African American landmarks and legacies as a means to revitalize neighborhoods and enhance self-esteem through pride of ancestry. A conference on African-American history sponsored annually by the Riley Center/Museum draws participants from around the nation.

The Riley Center/Museum has proposed two projects for inclusion in the African American World War II Memorial Hall at the Pentagon: The building of the Alcan Highway from Dawson Creek to Fairbanks Alaska and that of the Ledo/Stilwell Road between Ledo, Assam, India and Kunming, China.

Let me thank you for your interest in this landmark effort. I stand ready to provide you with any additional information you may need.

Sincerely,



William D. Law, Jr.
President



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The Center for Urban Redevelopment and Education
College of Architecture, Urban and Public Affairs
Reubin O'D. Askew Tower
111 East Las Olas Blvd., Suite 604
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301
Phone: (954) 762-5270; Toll free (866) 328-2879
Fax: (954) 762-5278
www.cure.fau.edu

January 14, 2004

Florida State Legislators
The Capitol
South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Legislators:

This letter is provided to share my knowledge of the work of the Florida African American Heritage Preservation Network, an organ of the John G. Riley Center/Museum, Inc. Established out of the Florida Statewide African American Heritage Preservation Conference in 2001, the network continues to assist individuals and organizations across the state with historical and cultural programs. Though limited in funds, volunteers from the Riley House have given technical assistance when called upon and have attempted to maintain some kind of cohesive entity to support African American preservation efforts happening across the state.

We have submitted a proposal to host the 2005 preservation conference. We view this as a way to help the network fulfill its mission as well as bring issues related to preservation to another part of the state through this formalized conference gathering and agenda. It is extremely important that there be a voice of this segment of the population. In order for this to occur, there must be adequate finances. In this regard, your approval of funds, dedicated to the mission of the network, would be of great value to the state of Florida, and to the endeavors that many of us are pursuing to save and preserve African American history and treasures. The benefits to youth and adults cannot be overstated.

Thank you for your support and if I can provide further information, please do not hesitate to call me at 954-762-5270.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ralph B. Johnson".

Ralph B. Johnson
Director

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NATIONAL TRUST
for HISTORIC PRESERVATION

1 December 2003

The Honorable Bill Nelson
U.S. Courthouse Annex
111 North Adams Street
Suite 208
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Dear Senator Nelson:

I am writing to endorse the efforts of the John Gilmore Riley House and encourage your support for obtaining operational funds for it.

The Riley House itself is the home of a former slave that has been rehabilitated and used as an educational tool and outreach center with interpretive programming and exhibits. The staff at the Riley House provides technical support on African American preservation issues to a large constituency and serves as a resource to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, particularly the Southern Office.

We have worked with the Riley House on a number of projects. Staff of the Riley House coordinated the highly successful Southeastern Regional African American Preservation Alliance's annual conference in Tallahassee in February, bringing hundreds of African American preservationists from throughout the southeast to northern Florida to examine common issues, share successes, and explore Tallahassee's rich history and preservation efforts. They have also served on the National Trust's Emerging Preservation Leaders Scholarship committee, screening applicants for a competitive scholarship program to attend the National Preservation Conference and other training opportunities.

The Riley House is remarkable for the on going mentoring it provides to young people interested in African American history. Interns, volunteers and staff members of the Riley

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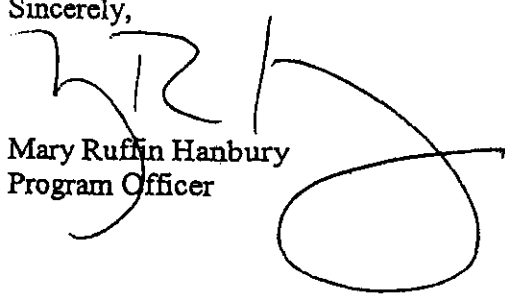
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House have pursued advanced degrees and moved on to new opportunities taking with them the wealth of experience they received at the Riley House thus making it a training ground for preservation professionals.

We appreciate your efforts on behalf of the John Gilmore Riley House and are happy to provide any additional information that you might require of us.

Sincerely,


Mary Ruffin Hanbury
Program Officer

January 6, 2004

Honorable Allen Boyd
United States Representative
107 Cannon Office Building
Washington, D.C., 20515

COPY

Dear Allen:

I regret that I was not present at the City Hall meeting in time to present the Riley House Foundation funding request, however, I have no doubt that other board members present made an excellent presentation to you.

As a member of the Board of Directors and Chairman of the Legislative Committee, I can attest to the very real and significant contributions the foundation and its museum have made to both our local community and to the State of Florida. My love of history brought me in contact with the foundation and I became a board member because I sincerely believe in its efforts to preserve Black History in our state.

As one of Florida's only preservers of black history, it has performed outstanding yeoman's service in multiple areas, with meager funding. Not only does it serve the general public, but it also serves our local school system, the Florida Department of State, national preservation committees and boards and local grassroots organizations. All of this is carried on by a mainly volunteer staff.

Although manned by these dedicated persons, the demands for services have continued to grow to such an extent that funding has become critical. While it has operated successfully in serving the public on contributions since 1996, it is now recognized that dedicated sources of funding are necessary for its continued success in preserving a vital part of Florida's history.

We are hopeful that through your leadership, federal funds can be obtained to help continue the very valuable programs the Riley House Foundation provides. If I can provide you additional information, please contact me.

Sincerely,



Dave Lang
6025 Roberts Road
Tallahassee, FL, 32309



Pinellas County African American History Museum
1101 N. Marshall Street
Clearwater, Florida 33755
Ph: 727-532-1698

January 12, 2004

The Florida Legislature
Senators and Representatives
The Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida

Dear Legislators:

My name is Sandra Rooks, and I am Director of the Pinellas County African American History Museum. The museum has been in operation since April 2000 with the mission of preserving and celebrating the achievements and contributions of African Americans in Pinellas County. Before we were established, our countywide museum had only 57 photos of African Americans in its archives. As a result of our partnership with them, the collection has expanded to well over 300. We also partnered with the County in doing research which led toward the restoration of one of the oldest African American schools in Pinellas County (Union Academy) which was moved from Tarpon Springs to the County's Historical Park in Largo.

Almost from the beginning, I have been in touch with Mrs. Althemese Barnes, Director of the Riley Center/Museum, for technical assistance as we moved along with our projects. Through the Florida African American Heritage Preservation Network, Mrs. Barnes has been extremely helpful with suggestions and recommendations and has always been willing to provide valuable contacts to bring our projects to successful ends.

We were also pleased to have Mrs. Barnes accompany the Tallahassee Boys' Choir to Pinellas County to perform at our Florida African American Heritage Celebration, an annual event that occurs the last weekend in February. Furthermore, it was a direct result of Mrs. Barnes's advisement that I wrote and had published the history of Blacks in St. Petersburg, Clearwater and Tarpon Springs, Florida. To her credit, I have three published books and am considering a fourth, the history of Blacks in Largo, Florida. These are just a few samples of the benefits that I have derived from the Florida Network and Mrs. Barnes, specifically. Because of her, I can now advise others who are seeking to implement historical programs in our schools and the community.

It goes without saying that I think highly of the assistance that I have been given and do not hesitate to advocate funding to support the efforts of the network. We have much to offer, but often cannot reach the height of our potential due to lack of funds. Your assistance would be deeply appreciated in order that we may continue this good work.

I can be reached at (727) 524-9068 should you have questions or desire additional information.

Sincerely yours,

Sandra W. Rooks

**SOUTHEAST AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE
PRESERVATION ALLIANCE**

**3007 Broad
Selma, Alabama 36701**

1/4/04

Members of the Florida Legislature
The Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida

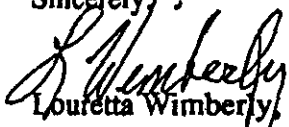
Dear Members:

As Chairman of the Southeast African American Heritage Preservation Alliance, I am sending this letter of support, attesting to the Riley House Center/Museum for African American History & Culture Inc. as a valuable entity of the alliance. Made up of nine states and the District of Columbia, the alliance, through its networks, provides leadership and encouragement across the southeast region to organizations that are seeking to save historic properties, vital history, and the legacies of African Americans.

Each year, a conference is held to provide information to alliance members and others with an interest in our mission. The Florida Network, under the auspices of the John Gilmore Riley Center/Museum, hosted the 2003 conference in Tallahassee, Florida. It was an outstanding conference, very well attended, and was well received by all concerned. This is a tribute to the fine leadership provided by Riley House Director, Althemese Barnes.

We look forward to great things from Florida and ask your support to assure that this is a reality. If you have questions, please contact me at 334/875-5894.

Sincerely,


Loretta Wimberly, Chairman
Southeast Alliance

**THE BLACK ARCHIVES, HISTORY AND RESEARCH
FOUNDATION OF SOUTH FLORIDA, INC.**

Joseph Caleb Community Center
5400 N.W. 22nd Avenue, Bldg. "C", Suite 101
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www.theblackarchives.org

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January 14, 2004

Members of the Florida Legislature
The Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

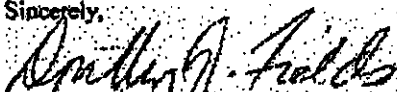
Dear Honorable Legislators:

I am providing this letter as a means of requesting your support for funding of the Florida African Heritage Preservation Network. The network, which was established by the Riley House Center/Museum at its 2001 conference in Jacksonville, is a much needed entity to assist with the preservation of African American landmarks and legacies across the state. With meager funds, the network has attempted to organize the statewide efforts of individuals and organizations to make a difference through preservation. It is time that funds are allotted to help support this work.

There are many preservation efforts underway. However, there is a need for a comprehensive entity to coordinate these efforts in a way that would be good for all of the organizations and the entire state. The network, through the Riley House, has provided this leadership on a limited scale. In order to operate at the institutional level that is required, there must be funds. The Elizabeth Ordway Dunn Foundation, provided seed money to get the network started. The State of Florida, our legislators, are being called upon to help sustain it and improve the services that are provided.

I thank you for your service to the state and ask that you extend that service to African American Heritage Preservation efforts like the network. If there are questions, I can be reached at (305) 636-2390.

Sincerely,



Dorothy Jenkins Fields
Historian, Founder and Chief Archivist



FLORIDA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION, INC.

203 South Monroe Street - Tallahassee, FL 32301

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January 7, 2005

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

At its quarterly meeting, Winter 2004, the Florida School Boards Association awarded Althemese Barnes with the Pat Spengler Award. This award recognizes an individual who has given outstanding support to advance education in the state of Florida through volunteer commitment and dedication. We were very pleased that the committee chose Mrs. Barnes, a native of Tallahassee and Florida, for her work with the John Riley Center/Museum and Florida African American Heritage Preservation Network.

A former educator in Leon County and retiree in 1995 from the Department of Education, Mrs. Barnes continues using her talents, skills, expertise and statewide relationships to enhance classroom instruction and community pride and involvement. Upon retiring, she founded the John Gilmore Riley Research Center/Museum and Florida Network that she heads as Volunteer Director, out of a need to continue giving to education. In this capacity, Mrs. Barnes has developed curriculums based on Florida Sunshine Standards and 21st century skill requirements that teach history and civic responsibility. These are being distributed by the Florida Department of State to schools throughout Florida, as well as nationwide, to enhance classroom instruction. She also works with culture center owners and operators and public institutions across the state to demonstrate how increased awareness of cultural heritage can positively impact individual and community pride.

Mrs. Barnes' commitment and hard work reaches far beyond these few cited examples. Statewide, her name is an icon in discussions relating to the teaching of African American and related history, and how it can be infused into the curriculum to improve reading and writing and enhance creative, analytical, and critical thinking skills.

The program started by Mrs. Barnes in 1996, is a model of how classrooms and community organizations can work together to achieve shared goals. Her efforts and those serving with her are duly recognized and appreciated by our organization.

Sincerely,

Wayne Blanton, Ph.D.
Executive Director

WB/jan

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10'd



January 6, 2005

House Speaker, Representative Allan Bense
The Capitol
402 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

Dear Speaker Bense:

Individuals and organizations in the Panhandle are appreciative of the work that Mrs. Althemese Barnes, through the Florida African American Heritage Preservation Network, is doing to help them identify, preserve, and interpret significant landmarks and legacies that help to teach Florida history and enhance their communities. Several projects in Jackson County have been directly assisted by the network and continue to have Mrs. Barnes' ongoing commitment. Her contributions and those of the network range from assisting with acquisition of funds, supporting historical projects, attending and participating in cultural events, to encouraging and providing technical assistance to individuals and organizations on how to protect their community's social and historic resources. Additionally, Mrs. Barnes and the network help to plan and develop educational programs.

Currently, projects in the cities of Marianna, Crestview, Panama City, Chipley, Vernon, Flowersview, Sneads, and other Panhandle areas continue to receive attention, valuable advice, and assistance from Mrs. Barnes through the Florida Network. Mrs. Barnes is currently assisting the Little Zion School Restoration Project (Bureau of Historic Preservation, Grant No. S0429) in Sneads, Florida. Mrs. Barnes' volunteer efforts demonstrate the potential to impact the lives of so many, fostering pride of ancestry and community. The magnitude of work that still needs to be done, however, demands financial support to bring adequate staff aboard to assist. It is necessary that financial support be directed toward this effort if it is to survive to meet a need of our communities. I ask that you please give it serious consideration and support as you deliberate and make decisions during the upcoming session.

Sincerely,

M. M. Clay
Maurice M. Clay
Community Development Specialist